

Which is the Man?

A

C O M E D Y,

I N

F I V E A C T S.

A S

IT IS PERFORMING

AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, SMOCK-ALLEY.

BY MRS. COWLEY.

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Dramatis Personæ.

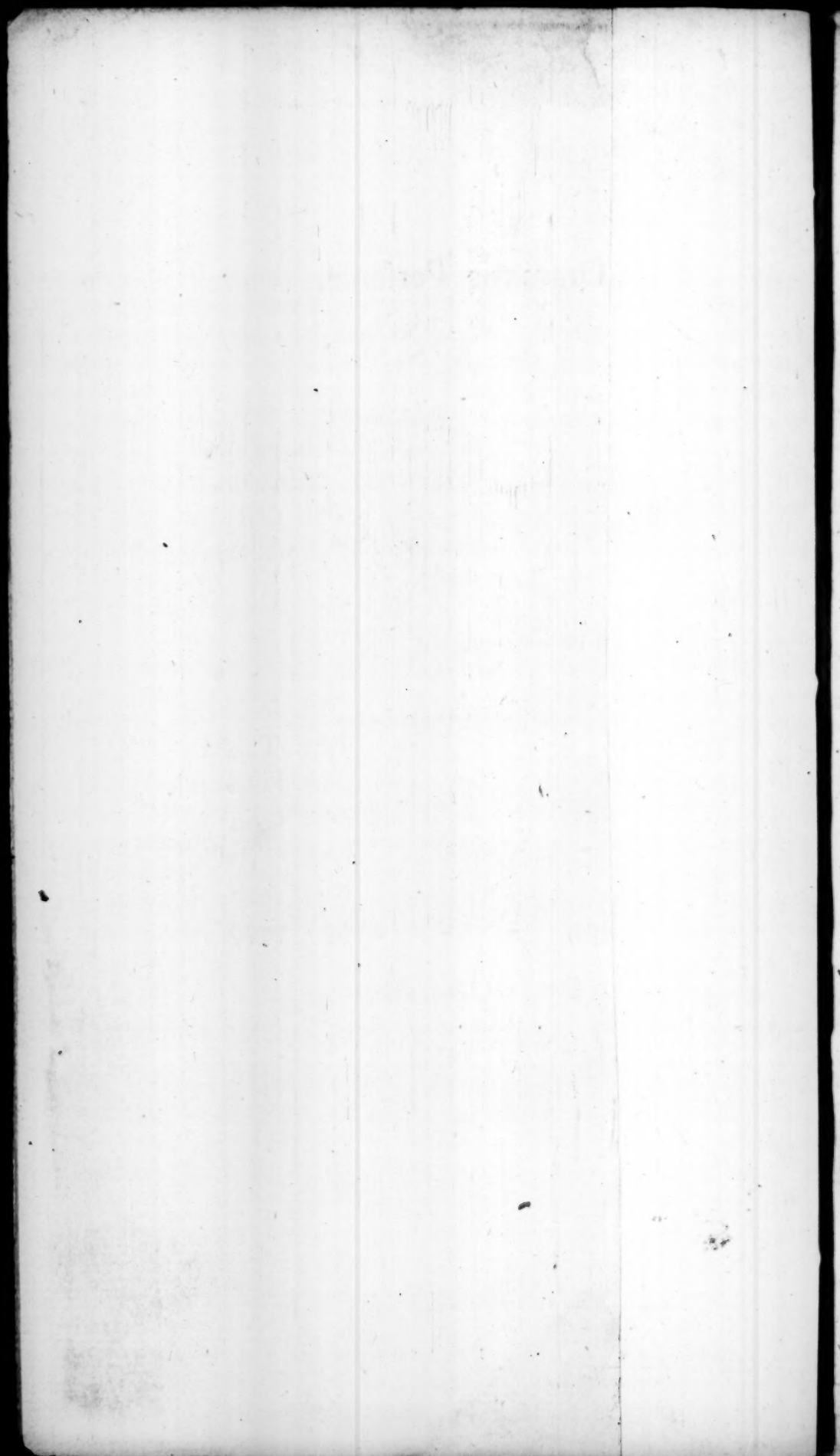
M E N.

Beauchamp	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Daly
Fitzherbert	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Mitchell
Belville	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Graham
Pendragon	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. O'Reilly
Lord Sparkle	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. G. Dawson

W O M E N.

Julia	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Inchbald
Clarinda	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Taplin
Miss Pendragon	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Hitchcock
Mrs. Johnson	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Gain
Kitty	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. O'Reilly
Tiffany	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Æcey
Lady Bell Bloomer	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Daly

Servants, &c. &c.



Which is the Man?

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Drawing Room.

Knock at the Door.

A Boy crosses the Stage ; Mrs. Johnson, following.

Mrs. Johnson.

HERE, Betty, Dick,—don't you see my *Lord Sparkle's* carriage? I shall have my lodgers disturb'd with their thundering.—What in the name of wonder can bring him here at this time in the morning.—Here he comes looking like a rake as he is.

Enter Lord Sparkle yawning.

Lord S. Bid 'em turn, I shan't stay a moment—So, Mrs. Johnson I pull'd the string, just to enquire how your Sylvans go on.

Mrs. J. As usual my Lord, but bless me! how early your Lordship is.

Lord S. How late you mean—I have not been in bed since yesterday at one—I am going home now to rest for an hour or two, and then to the drawing room;—but prithee, what are the two rustics
B

about—I have not been plagued with them these three or four days.

Mrs. F. They are out.

Lord S. I know that, or I should not have call'd—but do they talk of returning to their native woods again?

Mrs. F. Oh, no Sir,—the young gentleman seems to have very different ideas—Miss too, has great spirits—tho' she seems now and then at a loss, what to do with herself.

Lord S. Do with herself—Why don't you persuade her to go back to Cornwall?—You should tell them what a vile place London is, full of snares, debaucheries and witchcrafts—why don't you preach to'm Johnson?

Mrs. F. Indeed, I do my Lord,—and her constant answer is, Oh! my lord Sparkle is our friend,—lord Sparkle would take it amiss, if we shou'd go,—'twould look like distrusting his lordship.

Lord S. Was ever man so hamper'd—two fools! to mistake common forms and civilities for attachments.

Mrs. F. I fear my lord, towards the young lady,—something more than forms.

Lord S. Never upon my honour—I kiss'd her, so I did all the young and old women in the parish, the septennial ceremony—the brother I us'd to drink vile Port with, listen to his village stories, call his vulgarity wit, and his impudence, spirit,—was not that fatigue and mortification enough, but I must be boored with them here in town?

Mrs. F. But Miss talks, Sir, of pressing invitations and letters.

Lord S. Things in course, they had influence, and got me the borough—I in return, said she was the most charming girl in the world, that I ador'd her;

and some few things, that every body says on such occasions, and nobody thinks of.

Mrs. J. But it appears that Miss *did* think.

Lord. S. Yes faith,——and on my writing a civil note, that I should be happy to see them in town, and, so on, which I meant to have suspended our acquaintance till the general election, they took me at my word, so before I thought the letter had reach'd them, they were in my house,——all joy and congratulation, I didn't choose to be encumber'd with them, so plac'd them with you. The boy was at first amusing—but our circles had him, and I must be rid of him.

Mrs. J. I must say, I wish I was quit of 'em at present, for my constant lodger, Mr. Belville came to town last night, and he wants the drawing-room to himself.——He's oblig'd to share it now with Mr. Pendragon and his sister.

Lord S. Hey! Belville 'Gad that's lucky, there's not a fellow in town, better received by the women,——throw the girl in his way and get rid of her at once.

Mrs. J. If you mean dishonestly my lord, you have mistaken your person; I did not live so many years with your good mother, to be capable of such a thing—ah my lord! if my lady were living——

Lord S. She wou'd scold to little purpose—I tell you I care nothing about the girl—I merely want to get rid of her, and you must assist me? [*Mrs. Johnson turns away in disgust*] hey day! the nicety of your ladyship's honour is piqu'd, Ha, ha, ha!—the mistress of a lodging-house, *bien droit*, Ha, ha, ha,

[*Exit Mrs. Johnson.*]

But who is this hobbling up stairs? ha! Old Cato the Cenfor, my honourable Cousin—what the devil shall I do, no avoiding him. (*Enter Fitzherbert*) I wish

I had been out of the house, before you appeared,—I know I shall not escape without some abuse.

Fitz. I never throw away reproof, where there are no hopes of amendment.—Your lordship is safe.

Lord S. Positively my dear coz, you must give me, more of the felicity of your conversation; I want you to teach me some of that happy ease which you possess in your rudeness, 'twou'd be to me an acquisition. I am eternally getting into the most horrid scrapes,—merely by politeness and good-breeding—here are two persons now in this house for instance.

Fitz. Who does not know that the language of what you call politeness, differs from truth and honour,—you see, I know those to whom you allude,—But we only lose time, good day my lord.

Lord S. Lose time,—ha, ha, ha,—why of what value can time be to you? the greatest enemy you have, adding every day to your age and ill-nature,—I'll prove to you now, that I have employed the last twelve hours, to better purpose than you have—nine of them you have slept away—the last three, you have been running about town, snarling and making people uneasy with themselves, whilst I have been sitting peaceably at Brookes's—where I have won—guess what?

Fitz. Half as much as you lost yesterday, a thousand, or two guineas perhaps.

Lord S. Guineas! poh! you are jesting—guineas are as scarce with us, as in the coffers of the Congress,—like them, we stake with counters, and play for solid earth.

Fitz. (*Impatiently*) Well!

Lord S. Bullion is a mercantile kind of wealth, passing thro' the hands of dry salters, vinegar mer-

chants, and lord-mayors,—our goddess holds a cornucopia, instead of a purse, from which she pours corn-fields, fruitful vallies, and rich herds, — this morning she pop'd into my dice-box a snug villa,—500 acres arable and pasture, with the next presentation to the living of Guzzleton.

Fitz. A Church-living in a dice-box!—well, well! I suppose it will be bestowed as worthily as it was gain'd.—Good day my lord,—good day, (*turns from him.*)

Lord S. Good night Crabtree---good night. (*Going off.*)

Enter a Servant.

Tell Belville, I call'd to congratulate his escape from the stupid country.—(*going.*)

Fitz. My Lord?

Lord S. Sir?

Fitz. I am going this morning to visit lady Bell Bloomer—I give you this intimation, that we may not risk another rencounter.

Lord S. Civilly designed—and for the same polite reason, I inform you, that I shall be there, in the evening. [*Exit Lord Sparkle.*]

Fitz. Your master in bed yet? what time was he in town yesterday?

Serv. Late—we shou'd have been earlier but we met with Sir Hairbrain on the road with his new Fox hounds; fell in with the hunt near Bagshot, where they broke cover, ran the first burst across the Heath, towards Datchett—the Fox then took right an end for Egham, after that sunk the wind upon us, as far as Staines, where Reynard took the road to Oxford, and we the road to town. (*Bowing.*)

Fitz. Very geographical indeed, Sir!—now pray inform your master—Oh, here he comes.

Enter Belville, in a Robe de Chambre.

Just risen from your pillow?—are you not ashamed of this?—a Fox-hunter, and in bed at eleven!

Belv. My dear, charming, quarrelsome, old friend, —I am ever in character, in the country, I defy fatigue and hardship—up before the lazy slut Aurora, has put on her pink-colour'd gown to captivate the plough-boys, scamper over hedge and ditch, dead with hunger, alight at a cottage—drink milk from the hands of a brown wench, and eat from a wooden platter. In town I am a fine gentleman—have my hair neatly dress'd—my cloaths in the first taste—dine on made dishes, drink Burgundy,---and in a word, am every where in style.

Fitz. So much the worse,—so much the worse, young man; to be in style as you call it, where vice and folly are the ruling deities; proves that you must be sometimes a fool,—at others a ———

Belv. Psha! you satyrists, like moles, shut your eyes to the light, and grope about for the dark side of the human character. There is a great deal of good sense and good meaning in the world. As for its follies—I think folly a mighty pleasant thing; at least to play the fool gracefully, requires more talents, than would set up a dozen Cynics.

Fitz. Then half the people I know must have wonderful talents, for they have been playing the fool from sixteen to sixty,—apropos!—I found my excellent kinsman, lord Sparkle here.

Belv. Ay there's an instance, of the happy effects of total indifference, to the sage maxims you recommend.

Fitz. Happy effects do you call them?

Belv. Most triumphant!—who so much admired? who so much the fashion? the general favourite of the ladies,—and the common object of imitation with the men!—Is not lord Sparkle the happy man, who is to carry off, the rich and charming widow, lady Bell Bloomer from so many rivals? and will not you after quarrelling with him, half your life time, leave him a fine estate at your death?

Fitz. No, no, I tell you no.

Belv. Nay, his success with the widow is certain, he boasts his triumph every where, and as she is such a favorite of yours, every thing else will follow.

Fitz. No, for if she marries Sparkle, she will be no longer a favorite—yet she receives him with a degree of distinction, that sometimes puzzles me—for we frequently see women of accomplishments and beauty, to which every heart yields homage; throw themselves into the arms of the debauched, the silly and the vain.

Belv. You are too serious.

Fitz. Not at all, moderate talents can never be ridiculous, or contemptible, whilst pursuing virtue in her plainest forms, and fulfilling the duties of an honest man. But in him, rank and fortune, serve only, to expose the native barrenness of his mind, and no man can be at a loss to know, that he wants talents, as well as virtues, when his pursuits lead him into measures, which degrade his situation and character.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Beauchamp.

[*Exit.*

Fitz. I expected him to call on you this morning, you must obtain his confidence; it will assist me in

my designs—when I found myself disappointed in my hopes of his lordship; I selected Beauchamp from the younger branches of my family—He has been educated on a plan of my own, but of this he knows nothing, he thinks himself under high obligations to the patronage of lord Sparkle, an error in which I wish him to continue, as it will give me an opportunity of proving them both—but here he comes, this way—I can avoid him.

[*Exit Fitz.*]

Enter Beauchamp in Regimentals.

Belv. What spirit has seized thee now? when I saw thee last, I thought thou wert devoted to the grave professions of the law, or the church, and expected to see thee envelop'd in wig, wrangling at the bar, or seated in a fat benefice, receiving tythe-pigs and poultry!

Beau. Those were my school designs,—but the fire of youth gave me ardors of a different sort; (the vanity of rivalling Demosthenes) and I felt, that whilst my country was struggling amidst surrounding foes, I ought not devote a life to learn'd indolence that might be gloriously hazarded in her defence.

Belv. I shan't give you credit now, for that fine flourish; this sudden ardor, “for the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war.” I dare swear this heroic spirit, springs from the whim of some fine lady, who fancied you would be a smarter fellow, in a cockade and gorget, than in a stiff band and periwig.

Beau. If your insinuations mean, that my heart has not been insensible to the charms of some fine lady, you are right,—but my transformation is owing to no whim of hers—for, Oh! Charles, she

never yet condescended to make me the object of her thoughts.

Belv. Modest too! Aye you were right to give up the law—but who pray, may this exalted fair one be, who never condescended?

Beau. I never suffer my lips to wanton with the charming sounds, that form her name. I have a kind of miserly felicity in gloating on her dear idea, that would be impaired, should it be known to exist in my heart.

Belv. Ha, ha, ha, who can this nymph be? Who has inspired so obsolete a passion! In the days of Chivalry, it would have been the Ton.

Beau. I will gratify you thus far—The lady, has beauty, wit, and spirit,—but above all a mind—Is it possible, Charles to love a Woman without a mind?

Belv. Has she a *mind* for you? that is the most important question.

Beau. I dare not feed my passion, with so presumptuous a hope—Yet I would not extinguish it if I could. Mine is not a love which tempts me into corners, to wear out my days in complaints—it prompts me to use them for the most important purposes; the ardor it gives me, shall be felt in the lands of our enemies, they shall know, how well I love.

Belv. Poh. you are five hundred years too late; this is the kind of passion that animated our forefathers in the days of Cressly and Poictiers.—Our modern love, is of a different kind, it prompts us to the mighty deeds of drinking deep toasts, breaking glasses, and scribbling sonnets. But you are too humble, for not to wound your serious modesty, on a more *obvious* subject—Your family you know is noble.

Beau. True, but my birth, and a few hundreds for my education, were the sole patrimony the imprudence of my father, left me, my relation lord Sparkle, procured me a commission; generously to offer that, and a knapsack to a lady of three thousand a year, would be properly answered by a contemptuous dismissal.

Belv. But suppose she should take a fancy to your knapsack?

Beau. That would reduce me to the necessity of depriving myself of a happiness, I would die to obtain—for never can I submit to be quartered on a lady's fortune, whilst I have a sword to carve subsistence for myself.

Belv. That may be in the great stile—but 'tis scarcely in the politic.—Will you take Chocolate in my dressing room? and stop the remainder of the day with me?

Beau. No—I'm going to take orders at my Colonels.

Belv. Well! I'll commit myself to chance for the remainder of the day, and shall finish it, as she decides. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

Clarinda's House.

Enter Clarinda, reading a Catalogue, followed by Tiffany.

Clar. Poor lady Squander! So Christie has got her jewels and furniture at last.—I must go to the sale, mark that Dresden service and the Pearls (*gives the Catalogue to the maid*) It must be a great comfort to her, to see her jewels worn by her friends.—Who

was here last night? (*sitting down and taking some cards from the table*) I came home so late I forgot to enquire.—“Mrs. Jessamy, Lady Racket, Miss Belvair, Lord Sparkle.” (*starting up*) Oh! Heavens and earth! what possessed me to go to lady Prices! I wish she, and her concert of three fiddles and a flute, had been playing to her kids on the Welch mountains. Why did you persuade me to go out last night?

Tiff. Dear ma'am you seem so low spirited, that I thought—

Clar. I missed him every where,—at four places, he was just gone, as I came in. But what does it signify? 'Twas lady Bell Bloomer he was seeking I dare swear—his attachment to the relict, is every where the subject—hang those widows. I really believe there's something cabalistical in their names—no less than fourteen fine young fellows of fortune, have been drawn into the matrimonial noose, by them, since last February.—'Tis well they were threatened with imprisonment, or we should not have had an unmarried infant above seventeen, between Charing-Cross and Portman-square.

Tiff. Well, I am sure I wish lady Bell was married—she's always putting you out of temper.

Clar. Have I not cause? 'till she broke in upon the town—I was the top of the fashion—you know I was—my dress, my equipage, my furniture, and myself were the criterions of taste, but a new French chambermaid, enabled her ladyship, at one stroke to turn the tide against me.

Tiff. Ay, I don't know what those mademoiselles—

Clar. But Tiffany, she's to be at court to day, out of mourning for the first time—I am resolved

to be there—no I won't go neither, now I think on't—If she should really outshine me, her triumph will be encreased, by my being witness to it—no I won't go to St. James's, but I'll go to her route this evening, and if 'tis possible prevent lord Sparkle's being particular to her—perhaps that will put her in an ill humour, and then the advantage will be on my side. [Exit.

Tiff. Mercy on us! to be chambermaid to a miss, on the brink of thirty, requires as good politics, as being minister of state—Now if she should not rise from her toilet quite in looks to day, or if the desertion of a lover, or the victory of a rival should happen, ten to one, but I shall be forced to resign, without even a pension to retire on. [Exit.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

An elegant Apartment at lady Bell Bloomer's.

Enter Julia.

Julia.

WHAT an invaluable treasure! These dear letters, that have lain within the frigid walls of a convent, insensible, and uninteresting to every one around 'em—contain to me a world of happiness, if he is in England, how little he suspects I too am here.

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. Mr. Fitzherbert ma'am will be here immediately.

Jul. Mr. Fitzherbert! very well. Has lady Bell finished dressing yet?

Kitty. No madam, Mr. Crape, the hair dresser, has been with her these three hours, and her maid is running here and there—and Mr. John, flying about to milliners and perfumers, and the new vis a vis, at the door, to carry her ladyship to court. Every thing black varnished, and the new liveries come down, shining with silver—and the moment she's gone out, every body will be in such a delightful hurry, about the route that her ladyship, is to give this evening?

Jul. Ha, ha, ha,—prythee stop—I can't wonder if lady Bell should be so transported, at dropping her weeds—for it seems to have turned the heads of the whole family.

Kitty. Oh, 'dear ma'am, to be sure—for now we shall be so gay—lady Bell has such fine spirits—and 'tis well she has, for the servants tell me, their master would have broke her heart else—they all adore her—I wish you was a little gayer ma'am, somehow we are so dull, 'tis a wonder, so young and so pretty a lady——

Jul. Don't run into impertinence—I have neither the taste nor talents for public life, that lady Bell Bloomer has.

Kitty. Laws ma'am 'tis all use—You are always at home—but lady Bell knows, that wit and a fine person are not given for a fire-side at home (*Drawling*) she shines every evening in half a dozen parishes, and the next morning we have stanza's in the Bevy of beauties, and sonnets and billet doux, and all the fine things, that ladies are so fond of.

Jul. I can bear your freedom no longer, carry these flowers with my compliments, and tell her ladyship I sent to Richmond for them, as I know her fondness for natural bouquets—and bid Harry deny me to every body this morning except Mr. Fitzherbert.

[*Exit Kitty.*]

Enter Fitzherbert.

Fitz. Happily excepted my dear ward—but I suppose you heard my step, and threw in my name, for a douceur—I can hardly believe, that when you shut your doors on youth and flattery, you would open them to a cross old man, who seldom entertains you with any thing but your faults.

Jul. How! you mistake Sir! you are the greatest flatterer—your whole conduct flatters me with esteem and love, and as you do not squander these things—

Fitz. There I must correct you—I do squander them on a few objects indeed—and they are proportionably warmer—Where is lady Bell?

Jul. Yet at her toilet, I believe.

Fitz. When you returned from France, I prevailed on her to allow you her society, that you might add the polish of elegant manners to the graces of an elegant mind—Ha! here she comes—her tongue and her heels keeping time ———

Enter Lady Bell.

Ay, ay, if all the women in the world were prating young widows—love and gallantry would die away, and our men grow reasonable and discreet.

Lady Bell. Oh! you monster! but I am in such divine spirits! That all you can say can't destroy 'em—my sweet Julia, what a bouquet, lady Myrtle will expire, she was enveloped in flowers and evergreens last night, that she looked like the picture of fair Rosamond in the bower. My dear Fitzherbert, do you know we dined yesterday in Hill-street, and had the fortitude to halt till eleven.

Jul. I was tir'd to death with the fatiguing visit.

L. Bell. Now I, on the contrary came away with a fresh relish for society—The persevering civility of Sir Andrew, and the monkish insipidity of his tall daughter, ate like Olives, you cannot endure them on your palate, but they heighten the gusto of your Tokay.

Fitz. Then I advise your ladyship to serve up Sir Andrew, and his daughter, at your next entertainment.

L. Bell. So I would—only one cannot remove them with the desert? But how do you like me? Did you ever see so delightful a head! Don't you think I shall make a thousand conquests to day.

Fitz. Doubtless! if you meet with so many coxcombs—but pray, which of those, you have already made, will be most flattered by all the gay insignia of your liberty.

L. Bell. Probably he who it least concerns.

Jul. Pray tell us, which is that?

L. Bell. Oh heavens! to answer that requires more reflection than I have ever given the subject.

Jul. Should you build a temple to your lovers, I fancy lord Sparkle would have the place of honour.

L. Bell. Oh! lord Sparkle! who can resist the gay, the elegant, the all conquering lord Sparkle—the most distinguished feather in the plume of fashion—without that barbarous strength of mind, which gives importance to virtues, or vices; brilliant, because he's of the club at Brooke's, and uses his borrowed wit, like his borrowed gold as profuse as 'twere his own?

Fitz. Why now this man you understand, and so well receive, as tho' his tinsel was pure gold.

L. Bell. Ay, to be sure!—tinsel is just as well for shew, the world is charitable, and accepts tinsel for gold in most cases.

Fitz. But in the midst of all this sunshine, of lord Sparkle, will you not throw a ray on the spirited, modest Beauchamp.

L. Bell. Beauchamp! Oh, he thinks of no mistress but war—but how can I trifle thus (*looking at her Watch*) The moment of triumph is hand?

Fitz. What?

L. Bell. The moment of triumph—the moment when having shewn myself, to half the houses in St. George's, I am set down at St. James's my fellows standing at each hand; as I descend, the whisper flies thro' the crowd—Who's she? who's that fine creature? one of the four heiresses—no—she's a foreign ambassadress—I ascend the stairs, move slowly, thro' the rooms, drop my fan, incommode my bouquet, stay to adjust it, that the little gentry may have time to fix their admiration—again move on, enter the drawing room—throw a flying glance round the circle, and see nothing but envy in the eyes of the women, and a thousand nameless things, in those of the men!

Ful. The very soul of giddiness.

L. Bell. The very soul of happiness! Can I be less—think of a widow just emerged from her weeds, for a husband, to whom her father, not her heart united her——my jointure elegant——my figure charming, deny it if you dare——Pleasure, fortune, youth, health, all open their stores before me, whilst innocence and conscious honor be my handmaid, and guide me safely thro' the dangerous ordeal.

Fitz. To your innocence and conscious honor, add, if you have time, a little prudence, or your centinels may be surprized asleep, and you reduced to a disgraceful capitulation.

L. Bell. Oh, I am mistress of my whole situation, and cannot be surprized—but heaven's! I am losing conquests every moment I stay, the loves and pleasures have prepared their rosy garlands——my triumphal car is waiting, and my proud steeds neighing to be gone—away to victory.

D

[Exit *L. Bell.*

Fitz. Charming spirits, Julia! she conceals a fine understanding under apparent giddiness, and a most sensible heart, beneath an air of indifference.

Jul. Yes I believe, her ladyship's heart is more sensible, than she allows to herself—I rally her on lord Sparkle, but it is Mr. Beauchamp whose name, is never mentioned, but her cheeks tell such blushing truths, as she would never forgive me for observing.

Fitz. Upon my word, you seem well acquainted with your friend's heart, Julia, will you be equally frank as to your own?

Jul. (*In great confusion*) Sir! my heart——

Fitz. Yes, will you assist me in reading.

Jul. To be sure, Sir.

Fitz. Then tell me, if amongst the painted, powdered, gilded moths, whom your beauty and fortune have allured, is there one of whom you would honour with your hand.—Aye, take time, I would not have you precipitate.

Jul. (*Hesitating.*) No Sir, not one.

Fitz. I depend upon your truth, and on that assurance, I inform you that a friend of mine arrived in town last night, whom I mean this morning to present to you.

Jul. As a——

Fitz. As a lover who has my warmest wishes, that he may become your husband.

Jul. Do I know the person, for whom you are thus interested, Sir.

Fitz. You do not, but I have had a long intimacy with him, and it is the dearest wish of my heart to see him and Julia Manners united.

Jul. I trust, Sir, you will allow——

Fitz. Be under no apprehension! much as I am interested in this union—your inclinations, shall be attended to—I am now going to your lover, and shall

introduce him to you this morning. Come don't look so distressed child, at the approach of that period, which will give you a dignity and character in society—the married state, is that, in which your sex, evinces its importance, and where in the interesting circle of domestic duties, a woman has room to exercise every virtue, that constitute the great and the amiable. [Exit Fitz.]

Ful. The moment, I so much dreaded is arrived—How shall I reveal to my guardian and lady Bell, that I am married—That I have already dared to take upon me those important duties—I must not reveal it—my solemn promise to my husband! but where is he? Oh! I must write to him this moment, that I may not be left defenceless, to brave the storm of offended duty and love. [Exit *Ful.*]

S C E N E II.

An Apartment at Belville's.

Enter Belville followed by a Servant.

Belv. Let my trunks be packed, the chaise be got ready by six o'clock, for I shall dine at Dover. [Exit *Servt.*]

Enter Fitzherbert.

Fitz. Ha, just in time; I see you are ready plum'd for flight.

Belv. True, but my flight would have been to you, impatient to know the cause of your summoning me from the Dryades and Hamadryades of Berkshire—Your letter reached me, at the instant I was setting out for Dover in my way to Paris.

Fitz. Paris!

Belv. Yes.

Fitz. Poh, poh, stay where you are. The great turnpike between Dover and Calais, is a road destructive to this kingdom—and I wish there was toll-gates erected on its confines, to restrain with a heavy tax the number of its travellers.

Belv. I fear the tax would be more generally felt, than the benefit, for it would restrain not only the folly mongers and the fashion mongers, but the philosophic enquirers, and the travelling connoisseurs.

Fitz. So much the better, our modern travellers have done more towards destroying the nerves of their country, than all the follies of France, their chief aim seems to establish infidelity, and to captivate us with delusive views of manners, still more immoral and licentious than our own—Hey day! who's this? Oh, the Cornish lad I suppose that lord Sparkle has placed here.

Belv. Yes, an odd being, he was designed by nature for a clod-pole, but the notice of a peer overset the little understanding he had—and so he commenced fine gentleman. He has a sister with him, who ran wild on the commons, 'till her father died—But she fancies herself a wit, and satyrizes young Bruin—here he comes.

Enter Pendragon.

Pen. My dear fellow lodger, I am come to—oh your servant, Sir, (*to Fitz*). is the gentleman a friend of yours.

Belv. He is.

Pen. Your hand, Sir, if you are Mr. Belville's friend, you are my friend, and we are all friends, I love to make acquaintance.

Fitz. A great happiness!

Pen. Yes, so it is, and very polite too—I have been in the great world almost three weeks, and can see no difference between the great world, and the little world, only that they have no ceremony, so that the mark of good breeding I trust to hit off.

Fitz. With success.

Pen. To convince you of that, I'll tell you a devilish good thing—you must know——

Fitz. Excuse me now——But I'm convinced you will amaze me—and I desire your company at dinner, they'll give you my address below——Mr. Belville, I have business of importance——come along with me. *[Exit Fitz. and Belv.]*

Pen. Gad, I'm glad, he asked me to visit him——he must be a lord, by his want of ceremony——Mr. Belville, I have business of importance——and off they go——now in Cornwall, we should have thought that damn'd rude, but 'tis easy——Mr. Belville, I have business of importance——and all that sort of thing.

Enter Sophy Pendragon meeting him.

Sophy. Brother Bobby—brother Bobby.

Pen. I desire miss Pendragon, you won't brother me at this rate, making one look as if one didn't know life——How often shall I tell you, that it is the most ungenerous thing in the world; for relations, to brother, and father, and cousin one another, and all that sort of thing——I did not get the better of my shame for three days, when you bawl'd out at Launcetown concert, to Mrs. Dobson——aunt, aunt, here's room between brother and I—if cousin Dick will sit closer to father.

Sophy. Lack-a-day! where's the harm! what do you think one has relations given one to be ashamed of them?

Pen. I don't know what they were given us for? but I know no young man of fashion cares for his relations.

Sophy. More shame for young men of fashion—but I assure you, brother Bobby I shall never give in, to any such unnatural new-fangled ways—As for you! since lord Sparkle took notice of you, you are quite another thing—you us'd to creep into the parlour, when father had company, hanging your head like a dead partridge—Steal all round the room behind their backs, to get a chair—the sit down in one corner of it, tying knots on your handkerchief—and if any body drank your health—rise up, and scrape your foot so—thank you kindly Sir?

Pen. (*Shaking his fist*) If you miss Pendragon—

Sophy. But now when you enter a room, your hat is tossed carelessly on a table—you pass the company with half a bend of your body, fling yourself into a chair, throw your legs on another—pray my dear Sir, do me the favour to ring for John, to bring me lemonade—Mr. Plume, has been driving me all the morning in Hyde-Park, against the wind, and the dust has made my throat mere Plaister of Paris.

Pen. Hang me, if I don't like myself better at second hand than I thought I should. Why, if I do it as well as you Sophy, I shall soon be quite the thing; and now I'll give you a bit of advice—As 'tis very certain lord Sparkle means to introduce you to high life—'tis fitting you should know how to behave. I have been amongst them I can tell you.

Sophy. Well!

Pen. Why first of all—if you should come into a drawing room and find twenty or thirty people together in the circle—you are to take not the least notice of one of them.

Sophy. No!

Pen. No—The servant perhaps will give you a chair—if not slide into the nearest—the conversation will not be interrupted by your entrance—for they'll take as little notice of you, as you do of them.

Sophy. Psha!

Pen. Then be sure you are equally indifferent, to the coming in of others—I saw poor lady Carmine coming in one night dying with confusion, for the vulgarity and ill-breeding of her friend, who actually rose from her chair at the entrance of a duchess.

Sophy. Be quiet Bobby——

Pen. True, as I am a young man of fashion—then you must never let your discourse go beyond one word—if any one should happen to take the trouble to entertain the company, you must throw in charming!—odious—capital—never mount to a phrase—unless to that dear delightful one of—All that sort of thing!—the use made of that is wonderful—All that sort of thing, is an apology for want of wit——It is a substitute for argument—It will serve for a point of a story, or the fate of a battle—Yes, yes, all that sort of thing, has driven the boar into the forest——

Sophy. What Boar?

Pen. You fool, I don't mean a Pig.

Sophy. Well then upon going away.

Pen. Oh, you go away, as you came in, if one has a mind to give the lady of the house a nod, one may, but 'tis still higher breeding to leave her with as little ceremony as I do you.

[*Exit Pen. without looking at her.*]

Sophy. I wish I could be sure that was the fashion, not to mind forms, I'd go directly and visit lord Sparkle—I could tear my eyes out, to think I was abroad to day when he came—In all the books I have read I never met with a lover so careless as he is—he never comes to see me—sometimes I have a mind to treat him with disdain—And then I recollect all I have read of ladies behaviour, that break their lovers hearts—but he wont come near me—now I have been five days in a complying humour—still he keeps away—I'll be hang'd if I don't know what he is about soon—he shan't think to bring me from the land's-end to make a fool of me? *Sophy Pendragon* has more spirit, than he thinks of, and all that sort of thing.

Exit Sophy.

Re-enter Fitzherbert and Belville.

Belv. A wife heaven's last best gift—but—a—no—I shan't marry—I have a hundred little follies to act before I do so rash a thing.

Fitz. But I say you shall marry—I have studied you from eighteen and know your character, your faults, and your virtues—and such as you are, I have picked you out from all the blockheads and fools about you, to take a fine girl off my hands with twenty thousand pounds.

Belv. 'Tis a bribe doubtless - but what is the lady?—Coquette, Prude or Vizier?

Fitz. You may make her what you will?—treat her with confidence, tenderness and respect, and she'll be an angel, be morose suspicious, and neglectful—and she'll be a woman; the wife's character and conduct, is a comment on that of a husband.

Belv. Any thing more?

Fitz. Yes, she is my ward, and the daughter of the only friend of my youth.—I entertain parental affection for her, and give the highest proof of my esteem, in transferring you the care of her happiness, —refuse it if you dare!

Belv. Dare! my dear friend! I must refuse the honour you offer me.

Fitz. How?

Belv. To be serious—It is not in my power to wed the lady.

Fitz. I understand you—I am disappointed—I should have mentioned this subject to you, before I had suffered it to make so strong a feature in the picture of future happiness.

Belv. Would you had, that I might inform you, that I am married.

Fitz. Married! where, when, how and to whom?

Belv. Where,—in France.—When,—about eight months ago.—How,—by an English clergyman.—With whom,—oh! with such a one—she's a beauty of the Greek kind, which the mind, more than the eye—yet to the eye, nothing can be more lovely;—to this charming creature, add the name of Julia Manners, and you know my wife.

Fitz. Julia Manners! Julia Manners! did you say?

Belv. Yes, Julia Manners;—I first knew her at the house of a friend at Paris, whose daughter was in the same Convent with herself;—I often visited her at the grate, and at length by the assistance of mademoiselle Saint Oal, I prevail'd on her to give me her hand, but was immediately torn from her by

a summons to Florence, where I was dispatch'd to England on an affair of government.

Fitz. (Aside.) So, so, so—very fine!—I suppose you had the prudence to make yourself acquainted with the lady's family before you married her?

Belv. Yes, her family and fortune are elegant,—she has a guardian, whose address the sweet obstinate refus'd to give me, that she might herself reveal to him our marriage, which I had reasons however to request her not to do, 'till we both arrived in England.

Fitz. Then you have not seen your bride in England?

Belv. Oh! no, my Julia is yet in her convent. I have been engag'd in preparing for her reception in Berkshire,—and have written to inform her, that I wou'd meet her at Calais, but I fear my letters have miss'd her, and shall therefore set out for Paris to conduct to England, the woman who must give the point to all my felicities.

Fitz. And has Julia been capable of this? ungrateful girl! Is it thus she rewards my cares? *(aside.)*

Belv. Your silence,—your resentment, my dear friend, whilst they flatter, distress me.

Fitz. I am indeed offended at your marriage, but not with you—on you I had no claims.

Belv. I do not comprehend you!

Fitz. Perhaps not—at present I shall not explain myself. *[going.]*

Belv. Permit me to attend you, I am going to my stewards for my French letters, and hope to find amongst them, one from my sweet bride. *[Exit.]*

Fitz. Spite of displeasure, I can hardly conceal from him his happiness;—yet I will, Julia must be

punish'd,—to vice and folly I am content to appear
severe—but she ought not to have thought me so.—
I have not deserv'd this want of confidence.—Ah, she
must be punish'd. [Exit.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

*Lord Sparkle's House.**Enter Lord Sparkle and Beauchamp.**Lord Sparkle.*

POOOR George! and so thou wilt really be in a few days in the bosom of the Atlantic,

“Farewell green fields and sweet groves,
“Where Chloe engag’d my fond heart.”

Hey! for counterscarps, wounds and victory.

Beau. I accept of your last words for my omen, and now in the new spirit of Homer’s heroes, I shou’d take my conge, and depart with its influence upon me.

Lord S. First take an office which I know must charm you,—you admire lady Bell Bloomer.

Beau. Admire her!—yes by Heaven. (*with great warmth.*)

Lord S. No heroics, dear George—no heroics—they are totally out, both in love and war.

Beau. How my lord!

Lord S. Indifference! that’s the rule; we love, hate, quarrel, and even fight, without suffering our tranquillity to be incommoded;—nothing disturbs,—the

honest discernment will discover nothing particular in the behaviour of lovers on the point of marriage, nor in the married while the articles of separation are preparing.

Beau. Disgustful apathy!—what becomes of the energies of the heart, in this wretched system?—does it annihilate your feelings?

Lord S. Oh no, I feel for instance, that I must have lady Bell Bloomer,—and I feel curiosity to know her sentiments of me, of which however, I have very little doubt—but all my art can't make her serious; she fences admirably, and keeps me at the length of her foil;—to you she will be less on her guard.

Beau. Me! You surprise me my lord, how can I be of use in developing her ladyship's sentiments?

Lord S. Why, by lifting them,—when you talk of me see if she blushes, mention some woman as one whom I admire, and observe if she does not make some spiteful remark on her shape, complexion, or conduct, provoke her to abuse me with violence or to speak of me with indifference—In either cases I have her.

Beau. Your instructions are ample my lord,—but I do not feel myself equal to the embassy.

Lord S. (with pique) Your pardon, Sir,—you refuse to oblige me.

Beau. I cannot refuse,—my obligations to your lordship, make it impossible.

Lord S. Nay, prithee, don't be ridiculous—It is the last service you can do me.

Beau. I accept it as a proof of your lordship's confidence—and I will discharge it faithfully. (*aside*) It will at least give me occasion to converse with lady Bell, and to converse with her on love; Oh! my

heart, how wilt thou contain thy ardor in the trying moment? *[Exit.]*

Lord S. Ha, ha, ha, I am confirm'd in my suspicions—that the fellow has had the vanity to indulge a passion for lady Bell himself, well, so much the better—the commission I have given him, will sufficiently punish his presumption.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Kitty is below my lord, Miss Manners' woman.

Lord S. Ah! send her up, send her up,

[Exit Servant.]

I had began to give up that affair, but I think, I won't neither—It will be rather a brilliant thing to have lady Bell for a wife, and her friend for a mistress—yes, it will be a point, I think I'll have the eclat of the thing;

Enter Kitty.

well Kitty, what intelligence from the land of intrigue—what says the little frost-piece, Julia?

Kitty. Oh! nothing new my lord. She's as insensible as ever—I make orations all the day long, of your lordship's merit, goodness, and fondness, and—

Lord S. (Starting) Merit, goodness, and fondness, and don't you give a parenthesis to my sobriety, and my neatness too; ha, ha, ha, you foolish devil—I thought you knew better—tell her of my fashion, my extravagance—that I play deepest at Whites—am the best dress'd at the opera—and half ruin'd myself in granting annuities to pretty girls. Goodness and

fondness are baits to catch old prudes—not blooming Misses.

Kitty. What, my lord—is spreading out your faults the way to win a fine lady?

Lord S. Faults shine as a chambermaid's morality, with a vengeance—what have all my past lessons been thrown away upon thee, innocence! have I not told thee that the governing passion of the female mind is the rage of being envied? the most gen'rous of them would like to break the hearts of half a dozen of their best friends, only by the preference given to themselves, and who so likely to procure them that honour, as a man, on whom the women have heap'd their favours 'till they have ruin'd him? go home good Kitty and con your lesson afresh—if you can pick any stories of extravagance and gallantry, fix my name to'm and repeat them to your mistress.

Kitty. Then she'll tell 'm to lady Bell perhaps for a warning.

Lord S. For a warning, quotha—my devoirs to lady Bell, are of a different kind, and we understand each other. I address lady Bell for a wife, because she's the fashion—I address Julia for a mistress, because 'tis the fashion to have mistresses from higher orders than sempstresses and mantua-makers.

Kitty. And is that your only reason, my lord, for bribing me so?

Lord S. Not absolutely—I have a pique against her guardian, who, tho' he has the honour to be related to me, will not suffer me to draw on his banker for a single guinea, his estates indeed, he can't deprive me of, they must be mine, so as it can do no harm, I'll have the eclat of affronting him with spirit.

Kitty. Oh, gemini! I am glad to hear that, I'd do any thing to plague Mr. Fitzherbert, and can go

on now with a safe conscience; to mortify old stout fauce, would be the rarest fun I could have. He had like to have lost me my place once, because he thought I was flighty; but I will be up with him now.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Belville, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Enter Belville.

Lord S. My dear Belville (*apart*) go Kitty into that room, I'll speak to you presently.

[*Exit Kitty*

Welcome once more to the regions of business and pleasure.

Belv. I thank you, but pray, my lord—don't dismiss the lady.

Lord S. The lady; ha, ha, ha, that lady sir, is a lady's gentlewoman, an't please you, I suppose you have heard I am going to marry lady Bell Bloomer—we are the two most fashionable people in town, and of course must come together.

Belv. A clear elucidation.

Lord S. Now she has a friend, whom I mean at the same time to take for a mistress—won't that be a stroke—eh?

Belv. Your life is made up of strokes—every thing with you my lord, is a hit.

Lord S. True, true, I detest a regular mechanical mode of things—men of sense have one way of getting thro' life—men of genius another.

Belv. Doubtless, and the advantage lies with the men of genius—for to their genius are all their faults imputed—nay, their faults are considered as the

graceful meandrings of a mind, too etherial to be confin'd to the rules of common sense and decorum—a mighty easy way of building reputation—ha, ha, ha, you are dress'd with infinite malice to day my lord?

Lord S. Malice! not at all—the women now-a-days, are neither caught by finery, or person—I am dressed for court—I was going to Westminster, but I hear there is a presentation of misses to-day, and I would not for the world, lose the dear creatures blushes, on their first appearance, for faith most of them will never blush again—will you go?

Belv. 'Tis too late to dress, and I must see fifty people to-day, for I set off to-morrow for Paris, in search of a lovely absentee.

Lord S. Now, I never trouble my head about absentees; I love beauty as well as any man, but it must be in the present tense—shall I set you down any where?—I must go.

Belv. No—but I see your writing table is here—if you'll permit me, I'll pen a short note to Beauchamp, on business I had forgot this morning, and dispatch it by a chairman.

Lord S. To be sure—I pen'd a note ten minutes ago to my steward, to raise the poor devils rents—upon my soul I pity 'em, but my tenants, or the minister must enable me to live in—indeed I have very little expectations from the latter, as they have now rendered votes totally independent, one man's weight can be of little consequence in the scale—Adieu.

[*Whilst Sparkle is speaking Belville seats himself and begins to write.*]

[*Exit Sparkle, singing.*]

Belv. (writing) Good morning, my compliments to the blushes.

Enter Kitty, passing Belville.

Kitty. So, so, his lordship has forgot me, I must go after him.

Belv. (coming forward) That's the confidant—so pretty maid—whose chattels are you?

[throwing his arms round her.]

Kitty. My mistress's sir.

Belv. And who is your mistress?

Kitty. A lady sir.

Belv. And her name?

Kitty. That of her father, I take it.

Belv. Upon my word your ladyship has a brilliant companion—is she as clever as you are?

Kitty. Not quite—or she wouldn't keep me to eclipse her.

Belv. Bravo!—I wish I knew her? will you tell me her name?

Kitty. Poh, what signifies asking me? you know well enough who she is—I heard you and lord Sparkle talking about her—let me go—for I'm going to carry a message to Mr. Fitzherbert.

Belv. Mr. Fitzherbert!

Kitty. Ay, her guardian.

Belv. Her guardian, what Fitzherbert of Cambridgeshire?

Kitty. Yes—and if you want to know more he's the crossdest old wretch that ever breath'd, you'll find him out by that description, and so—your humble servant.

[Exit Kitty.]

Belv. Fitzherbert's ward, and this creature her servant; and lord Sparkle plotting to get her for a mis-

tress—I am astonished—the very lady, he this morning offered for a bride. Well, I must find Fitzherbert immediately. (*putting the paper into his pocket*). Lord Sparkle, will perhaps think me guilty of a breach of honour (the imputation I must incur) that I may not be guilty of a breach of humanity and gratitude.

[*Exit Belv.*]

S C E N E II.

Lady Bell Bloomer's.

Enter Fitzherbert, followed by a Servant.

Fitz. Tell Miss Manners I am here—I cannot perhaps be (*Exit Servant*) seriously angry with Julia—but I must take some revenge on her disobedience—come in young cornish, pray—

Enter Pendragon.

Pen. What does the lady live in this fine house?

Fitz. Yes, but pray observe, that I dont engage she shall be smitten with you, I can go no farther, than to introduce you; the rest must depend upon the brillianey of your parts.

Pen. Oh, leave me alone for that, I knew how it would be, if once I shewed myself in London—If she has a long purse, I whisk her down to Cornwall, jockey lord Sparkle—and have the borough myself.

Fitz. A man of spirit I see—but here comes the lady (*enter Julia*) Julia my dear, Mr. Pendragon—Mr. Pendragon this is my ward, who, I am sure, will give your addresses all the encouragement I wish

'em.

F 2

Pen. Servant Madam, (*aside*) she looks plaguy glum.

Julia. (*aside*) I can scarce support myself!

Fitz. Pray my dear, speak to Mr. Pendiagon—you seem greatly confus'd.

Pen. Oh, Sir, I understand it—young ladies will look confus'd, and embarrass'd, and all that sort of thing, on these occasions.

Julia. Heavens! is it to such a being I shou'd have been sacrificed.

Pen. I see your ward is one of the modest, diffident ones—I am surpris'd at that—bred in high life.

Fitz. Oh, now and then you find a person of that cast, in the best company—but they soon get over it.

Pen. Yes, formerly, I had use to blush, and all that sort of thing, but if any one ever catches me modest again, I'll give them my estate for a pilchard.

Julia. Then it seems impossible—pardon me sir (*to Fitz.*) that a union can take place between you and me—for I place modesty among the elegancies of manners, and think it absolutely necessary, to the character of a gentleman.

Fitz. (*aside*) Well done Julia, how can you find to treat my friend with such asperity.

Pen. Oh, leave her to me, Sir, she's ignorant, but I shall teach her—there are three things miss, only necessary to the character of a gentleman—a good air, a good assurance, and good teeth.

Julia. (*to Fitz.*) Does not his list want good manners, sir?

Pen. Oh, no madam—if you had said good taste, it wou'd have been nearer the thing, but even that is unnecessary—a gentleman's friends can furnish his

house, and chuse his books, and his pictures, and he can learn to criticise them by heart—nothing is so easy as to criticise.

Fitz. You see Mr. Pendragon has information, Julia,——I'll leave you a few moments, that he may unfold himself to advantage—and remember if you refuse the man I have design'd for your husband——you lose me, keep it up with spirit, I'll wait for you below (*aside*) now shall impertinence and disobedience correct each other.

[*Exit Fitz.*

Pen. Now to strike her with my superior ease (*aside*) so, Miss, your guardian I think has a mind that we shall in the vulgar speech, marry, and all that sort of thing.

Julia. Well sir, but are you not 'frighted at your approach to such a state—do you know what belongs to the character of a husband?

Pen. What belongs to it? aye, do you know what belongs to being a wife?

Julia. Yes, I guess that to your wife, will belong ill-humour with you at home—shame with you abroad—in her face, forc'd smiles, in her heart hidden thorns.

Pen. The devil! what, you have found your tongue madam, oh, oh, I shall have a fine time on't I guess, when our connection begins.

Julia. Our connection, pray sir, drop the idea; I protest to you, that were it possible for me to become your wife, I should be the most wretched of women.

Pen. Oh, no, you wou'dn't—nothing so common, as wretched wives, my dear.

Julia. Unfeeling man! wou'd you presume to enter into a state, to the happiness of which, union of

souls—delicacy of sentiment, and all the elegance of polish'd manners, are necessary and indispensable.

Pen. What's all that,—union of souls, sentiment and attention?—that's not life I'm sure.

Julia. I am not able to conceive by what witchcraft Mr. Fitzherbert has been blinded, to the weakness of your understanding and the turpitude of your heart; tell him, Sir, there is not a fate, I wou'd not prefer to that of being united to a man, whose vice is the effect of folly, and whose folly is as hateful, even as his vice.

[*Exit Julia.*

Pen. Yes, yes, I'll tell depend on't—egad she's a spirit, so much the better—more pleasure in taming her—a meek wife cheats a man of his right, and deprives him of the pleasure of exacting her obedience. Let me see, vice, folly, impudence, ignorance, hatred—he shall have it all.

[*Exit Pendragon, repeating the words.*

Re-enter Julia.

Julia. What have I done? I dare not now see my guardian, his displeasure will kill me. Oh, Belville! where art thou? come, quick, and shield thy unhappy bride; what steps can I take, (*musing.*)

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. Dear ma'am I'm so griev'd to see you so unhappy—if I had such a cross old gentleman, I'd run away from him.

Julia. The very thought which that instant presented itself to my mind. Have you not told me some relations of your's had lodgings?

Kitty. Yes ma'am the most elegantest in London.

Julia. I don't want elegant apartments, but I wish for a short time to be conceal'd in some family of reputation.

Kitty. To be sure madam, 'tis the most prudent thing you can do.

Julia. And yet my heart fails me.

Kitty. Oh, ma'am, don't hesitate—I'll go and pack up a few things, and call a coach, and be off before lady Bell comes from court.

Julia. I fear 'tis a wrong step, and yet, what else can I do?—I dare not reveal my marriage without the permission of my husband, and till his arrival I must avoid both a guardian's anger and the addresses of a lover, the honor of Belville would be insulted, shou'd I permit them to be repeated. (*aside.*)

[*Exit.*

Kitty. I know not what she means, but there is some mystery I find—so there shou'd be—if ladies had not mysteries, a chambermaid's place, wou'd be hardly worth keeping.

[*Exit.*

S C E N E III.

Clarinda's House.

Enter Lady Bell.

L. Bell. Ha, ha, ha, my dear creature what an embarrass—driving swiftly thro' the streets—lady Whipcord, dash'd upon me in her flaming phaeton and fix—gave a monstrous big New-market word to my poor fellows, and with infinite dexterity entangled the traces—it happened near your door, so I have taken

shelter with you, and left her ladyship to settle the dispute with her coachman—ha, ha, ha, but why were you not at court to-day?

Clar. I had a teasing head-ache—but pray tell me what happened there? [*aside*] deuce take her, she looks as well as ever.

L. Bell. Oh, as to court, you know its just the same thing over again——nothing so flat as the men, the horrid English taste ruin them for conversation, they make themselves members of clubs, in the way of business, and members of parliament in the way of amusement—all their passions are reserved for the first, and all their wit for the last.

Clar. 'Tis better in Paris.

L. Bell. Oh, amazingly, whilst we awkwardly copy the follies of the Parisian, we absurdly omit the charming part of their character, devoted to elegance they catch their opinions, their wit, and bon mots—from the mouths of the ladies; 'tis in the drawing-room of madam the duchess, the marquis learns his politics, whilst the sprightly countess dispenses taste and philosophy to a circle of bishops, generals and abbés.

Clar. All that may be just, yet I am mistaken if you have not found one Englishman to reconcile to you the manners of the rest—lord Sparkle for instance—your ladyship thinks I am sure he has wit at will.

L. Bell. Oh, yes, quite at will——his wit like his essence bottle, is a collection of all that is poignant in a thousand gather'd flowers, and like that, is most useful when he is most insipidly vacant.

Clar. With such sentiments I wonder you can suffer his addresses.

L. Bell. What can I do? the man is so much the fashion, and I shall be so much envied, why, you know my dear, for instance, you'd be inclined to

stick a poison'd nosegay in my bosom, if I shou'd take him.

Clar. Oh, oh, ridiculous! believe me madam, I shall neither prepare a bouquet, nor invoke a fiery shower to grace your nuptials.

L. Bell. No your showers would be tears I fancy, here he comes.

Clar. Hah! lord Sparkle! your ladyship's accident was fortunate.

Enter Lord Sparkle.

Lord S. Heavens! lady Bell! why your horses fly like the doves of Venus—I followed you from St. James's, but my poor earth-born cattle woud'nt keep pace with yours.

Clar. Oh, don't complain if her ladyship won the race, you see she stops for you at the goal.

Lord S. Charming Miss Bellmour—what an enlivening intimation——where was your ladyship on Thursday—you wou'd have found excellent food for your satyr at Mrs. Olio's. We had all the law ladies from Lincolns Inn—a dozen gold velvets from Bishopsgate, with the wives and daughters of half the M. D's. and L. L. D's. in town.

L. Bell. Oh, my entertainment was quite as good as yours—we were in Brooke-street, at lady Laurell's, I found her surrounded by her literati of all denominations—masters of art, and misses of science—on one hand, an essayist, on the other, a moralist—there a poetaster, here a translator—in that corner a philosopher, in the other a compiler of magazines, tropes, epigrams, and syllogisms, flew like sky rockets in every direction, 'till the ambition of pre-eminence lighted the flame of controversy, when they gave each other the lie literary, with infinite spirit and decorum.

Lord S. Excellent! I'll repeat every word in a place where it will be remember'd and the satyr enjoyed.

Clar. In that hope your lordship may safely knock, at every door in the street, satyr is welcome every where.

L. Bell. Yes, if it will bear a laugh—that's the grand art of conversation, they pretend we are fond of flanders, but rob scandal of its laugh, and 'twou'd soon be banish'd to the second table for the amusement of the butlers and chambermaids.

Lord S. Why then I believe half the company wou'd go down stairs too, for they wou'd think their servants had the best dish.

Enter a Servant with a letter.

Lord S. (Reads aside.) Julia! astonishing, so sudden in your movements, Mrs. Kitty; this vulgar thing call'd business, is the greatest evil in life; it breaks in upon our most brilliant hours, and is fit only for younger brothers and humble cousins—Miss Bellmour, I must tear myself away. Lady Bell shall I have the honour of attending your ladyship to your carriage?

L. Bell. If you please, Miss Bellmour I must tear myself away—but you'll shine upon us to-night.

[Exit lord Sparkle and lady Bell.]

Clar. Shine upon you at night, that I know you are insolent enough to believe impossible, what can I think of her sentiments to lord Sparkle, sometimes I think its a mere attachment of vanity on both sides—that reserv'd creature Beauchamp—but he leaves town

this very day, I have no opportunity of conversing with him (*mus'ing*) there is but one choice, going to visit him, but how can I possibly do that—deuce take him if he had a library, one might go look at his books—well, I don't care, go I will—and if I can't invent an excuse---I'll put a good face upon the matter, and go without one (*going*) I shou'd expire, if my visit shou'd be discover'd (*returning*) poh, I must risk every thing----to be bold is sometimes to be right.

[*Exit Clarinda.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

*An elegant Apartment at lady Bell Bloomer's.**Enter Lady Bell and her Maid.**Lady Bell.*

MISS Manners gone out in a hackney coach,
and no message left.

Maid. No madam.

L. Bell. Very strange.

Maid. Mr. Beauchamp, has been waiting almost an
hour in the parlour for your lady ship's return.

L. Bell. Mr. Beauchamp!—here go and put some
Otto of Roses in that handkerchief. [*Exit Maid.*]
Now shall I admit him, or not? this formal waiting,
looks so very like formal business, poh! I hate that.
I suppose he has at length vanquished his modesty,
and come to tell me that he loves me. That he could
not leave England without breathing his sighs at my
feet and all that—Well I think I won't hear him, yes
I will, I long to know the stile in which these men
make love;—To what imprudence would my heart
betray me—yet I may surely indulge myself in hear-
ing him speak of love—in hearing probably for the
first time its genuine language.

Enter Maid and gives a handkerchief.

Tell Mr. Beauchamp I am here, [*Exit Maid*] Now how shall I receive him—It will be preposterous to be formal—[*takes her fan and hums a tune.*]

Enter Beauchamp.

Oh, lord, Mr. Beauchamp this is the luckiest thing! I have had ten disputes to day, about the figures in my fan, and you shall decide 'em—Is that beautiful nymph, a flying Daphne, or an Atalanta?

Beau. [*having looked at the fan*] From the terror of her eye, madam, and the swiftness of her step, it must be a Daphne—I think Atalanta's head would be more at variance with her feet, and whilst she flies, her eye would be invitingly turned upon her pursuer.

L. Bell. I think you are right, yes I think there does want the kind inviting grace to be sure.

Beau. What a misfortune to a lover—I know one to whom your ladyship appears the disdainful Daphne—how happy could he behold in your eye the encouragement of Atalanta's.

L. Bell. Mercy! for so bashful a man, that is very broad. [*aside*]

Beau. This probably is the last visit I mean to make your ladyship before I leave England! will your ladyship permit me before I leave the country, to acquaint you that there is a man whose happiness depends on your favours.

L. Bell. So now he's going to be round about again, [*aside*—A man whose happiness depends on me, Mr. Beauchamp?

Beau. Yes ma'am—and—and—I cannot go on—
[*aside*] Why did I accept a commission, in which success would destroy me.

L. Bell. [*aside*] How evidently! this is the first time that he ever made love—the man seems to have chosen a very diffident advocate in you, Sir.

Beau. 'Tis more than diffidence, madam, my task is painful.

L. Bell. Aye, I thought so—you have taken a brief in a cause you don't like—I could plead it better myself.

Beau. I feel the reproach.

L. Bell. 'Tis difficult perhaps for you to speak in the third person, try in the first—Suppose, I say for the jest sake, that you yourself have a passion for me, and then try how you can plead it.

Beau. [*kneeling*] Thus then would I plead it, and swear that thou art dear to my heart as fame and honour—to look at thee is rapture, and to love thee tho' without hope—felicity

L. Bell. Oh! I thought I should bring him to the point at last. [*aside*]

Beau. [*rising and aside*] To what dishonesty have I been betrayed——thus madam speaks my friend, thro' my lips—'tis thus he pleads his passion.

L. Bell. [*aside*] Provoking! what friend is this Sir, who is weak enough to use another man's language to explain his heart?

Beau. Lord Sparkle!

L. Bell. Lord Sparkle! was it for him you knelt [*he bows*] then Sir, I must inform you that the liberty you have taken—[*aside*] Heav'ns how do I betray myself—tell me Sir, on your honour—do you wish to succeed in pleading the passion of lord Sparkle?

Beau. My obligations to his lordship, our relationship, the confidence he reposed in me——

L. Bell. Stop Sir,—I too will repose confidence in you, and confess that there is a man whom I sometimes suspect not to be indifferent to me—but do not tell him so—and tell him that—that—tell him what you will.

Beau. Heav'ns! what does this mean—what language is this her eye speaks [*aside*].

L. Bell. Do you visit me this evening—here will be many of my friends, you shall then see me in the presence of the man my heart prefers.

Exit Beauchamp bowing.

Now have I done a monstrous weak thing—Why did my foolish emotion, while I thought he was pleading his own passion, persuade me that I was in love—love! I hate the frightful thought, I protest I'll send and forbid his coming—no, I won't neither—I shall like to see how he behaves while under the influence of hope. But if I feel my heart really in danger of being taken in, I shall hate him outrageously.

[*Exit L. Bell.*]

S C E N E II.

Lord Sparkle's

Enter Julia and Kitty.

Jul. I am so agitated with the rash step I have taken, I can hardly breath—[*throws herself into a chair*] Why did you confirm me in my imprudent resolution.

Kitty. Imprudent! I am sure ma'am, 'tis very prudent and very right, that a young lady like you should not be snubb'd, and have her inclinations thwarted by an ill-natured positive old uncle.

Jul. What apartments! and the hall we came thro' had an air much beyond a lodging house—'tis all too

fine for my purpose—I want to be private—[*looks about*]

Kitty. Oh dear ma'am, you may be as private here as you please [*rap*] there's my cousin come home, I dare say, I'll send her to you and then you may settle terms.

Exit Kitty.

Jul. I feel I have done wrong, and yet I am so distracted that I know not how I could have done otherwise.

Enter Lord Sparkle.

Heav'ns! Lord Sparkle here!

Lord S. Yes my lovely Julia! here I am, and upon my soul, if you knew the engagements I have broke, for this happiness, you would be satisfied.

Jul. Satisfied! I am astonished!—equally astonished at your being here, and at your strange addresses.

Lord S. Astonished at my being here! why to be sure its not usual to find a man of fashion in his own house—but when I heard you was in my house, how could I do less than fly home.

Jul. Home! your own house--what can all these mean?

Lord S. Mean! love, gallantry, joy and ever new delights.

Jul. Oh! I'm betrayed—where's my wicked servant.

Lord S. Poh! never think of her—why all this flutter, my sweet girl—you have only changed guardians, and you shall find that being a ward to a young man of spirit and fashion, is a very different thing from—

Ful. Oh heav'ns what will become of me.

Lord S. Nay this is quite ridiculous after having fled to my house for protection yourself—I feel myself highly honoured by your confidence, and will take care to deserve it.

Ful. Why do I remain here an instant.

[*goes to the door.*]

Lord S. [*holding her*] This is downright rudeness, but you young ladies are so fickle in your resolution—but be assured after having chosen my house for an asylum, I shall not be so impolitic as to suffer you to seek another.

Ful. Oh! wretched artifice! you know Sir, that your house and you, I would have fled from to the farthest corner——

Enter Beauchamp.

Oh! Mr. Beauchamp! save me, I have been basely betrayed.

Beau. Betrayed! miss Manners—yes ma'am I will protect you at every hazard.

Lord S. Come, none of your antique virtues George, pray—this is a piece of business of the eighteenth century—you can't probably understand it—miss Manners chose to pay me a visit, and I desire you'll leave us.

Ful. My lord, how dare you, thus trifle with a woman's honor.

Beau. Be not alarmed madam, I will protect you——

Lord S. Poh! prithee George be discreet—this is all female artifice—you pop'd upon us, and this is a salve for reputation. [*apart.*]

H

Beau. Pardon me my lord, in believing you in opposition to the evidence of this young lady's terrors—I may be guilty of irremediable error.

Lord S. Nay if you are serious—how dare you break in upon my privacy.

Beau. This is not a time to answer you my lord—the business that brought me here, I am indebted to, I should not else have prevented your base designs.

Lord S. Base designs, Mr. Beauchamp.

Beau. Yes lord Sparkle—shall I attend you home. [*to Julia.*]

Jul. Oh Sir, I dare not appear there, I fled from lady Bell, when I was betrayed into his inhuman power—convey me to some place where I may have leisure to reflect on my situation.

Lord S. And do you think Mr. Beauchamp, I shall put up with this?—remember Sir—

Beau. Yes my lord, that as a man it is my duty to protect endangered innocence, as a soldier it is a point of the essence of my character, and whilst I am grateful to you for the commission, I have the honour to bear—I will not disgrace it, by suffering myself to be intimidated by your frowns.

[*Exeunt Beau. and Jul.*]

Lord S. So, so, an ancient hero, in the house of a modern man of fashion—the devil Alexander in the tent of Darius, Scipio, and the fair Parthenia, the fellow has not an idea, since the Olympaids, Oh, I must be rid of him immediately.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Pendragon and his sister, my lord.

Lord S. Who?

Serv. Mr. Pendragon and his sister.

Lord S. Then carry them to the house-keeper's-room—give 'em jellies and plumb-cakes, and tell 'em —

Enter Pendragon and Sophy.

Oh, my dear miss Pendragon you honour me—but I am the most unlucky man on earth—I am obliged upon business, of infinite consequence, to be at Whitehall in five minutes.

Pen. But first my lord, you must settle a little business here with miss Pendragon —

Sophy. I'll tell you Bobby, I'll speak myself, and as few words are best—pray, my lord what do you mean by treating me in this manner?

Lord S. I shall be miserable beyond bearing, if any treatment of mine has incurred your displeasure.

Sophy. Well now you talk of being miserable you have softened my heart at once, but pray my lord is it fashionable for people on the terms that you and I are, to keep asunder, never even to write; no billet, no bribing the maid to slip notes into my hand—why you don't even complain, tho' tis five days since you saw me.

Lord S. Complain! I am sure I have been exceedingly wretched.

Sophy. Then why didn't you tell me so, that's the very thing I wanted—If I had known you had been wretched, I had been happy.

Pen. Well, I see, I shall lose an opportunity—Here I come to challenge you my lord.

Lord S. Challenge me!

Pen. Yes, Miss Pendragon, told me that she was dissatisfied—then says I, I'll demand satisfaction, and I don't care if things had gone on a little farther,

for to call out a lord—lord! what a feather that would be in my cap—but however you are agreed.

Sophy. Be quiet Bobby, we are not agreed—nothing of settlement yet—nothing of jewels.

Lord S. My dear ma'am!—you are pleased to amuse yourself.

Sophy. Why my lord, these things must be all settled before hand you know.

Lord S. Before what?

Sophy. Why before our marriage, my lord?

Lord S. Marriage!

Sophy. Hey-day! why will you pretend that you did not intend to marry me? When I can prove that you have courted me from twenty instances.

Lord S. Indeed!

Pen. Aye, that she can—Instances as striking as your lordship's red heels—come miss Pendragon, your proofs, I'll support.

Sophy. Why in the first place, my lord, you placed a nosegay in my bosom, and said, Oh, I wish I was those happy roses—the very speech, Sir Harry Hargrove made to miss Woodville—another time you said I was a most bewitching and adorable girl—exactly what colonel Finch said to lady Lucy Lustre—another time, you said, how well would a coronet become those shining tresses—the very speech of lord Rosehill to miss Danvers—and these couples were every one married.

Lord S. Married! I never heard of 'em—who are they—where the devil do they live?

Pen. Live! why in our country to be sure.

Sophy. No, no, Bobby, they live in the Reclaimed Rake, and Constant Lovers, and Sir Charles Grandison, and Roderic Random, and—

Pen. Aye, you hear they live at Random with Sir Charles Grandison.

Lord S. Ha ! ha, ha, you are a charming little lawyer faith, and might perhaps establish your proofs for precedents, if Sir Charles Grandison was on the bench—yet I never heard of his being made chief justice, tho' I never thought him fit for any thing else.

Pen. What the devil's this, what didn't you bring all those fine proofs from fashionable life, and are you such a fool as not to understand what we call common place.

Sophy. Common place !

Pen. Yes, we persons of elegant life, use the figure hyperbole—and all that sort of thing !

Sophy. Hyperbole—what then you have been mocking me, my lord.

Lord S. Not in the least—I shall be the happiest man existing to—to—[aside] egad I must take care of my phrases—I mean I shall be always and upon all occasions, your most devoted tres humblement serviteur—was there ever two such country bumpkins.

[Exit Lord S.]

Sophy. Oh villian, monster, I am forsaken, and all Cornwall shall know it.

Pen. Tin mines and all.

Sophy. Oh ! I am forsaken.

Pen. I am glad on't with all my heart—I'll challenge him yet, and they won't know down in Cornwall exactly the thing—they'll hear that a lord fought about you—and all that sort of thing, and whether for you or against you 'twill be much the same.

Sophy. But will you now challenge him really.

Pen. Upon honor I admire the eclat of the thing, egad, Sophy I am glad he has forsaken you, now my character will be finished, a man can't shew his face in company 'till he has stood a shot, and fired his pistol in the air.

Sophy. In the air! if you don't fire it through him—

Pen. Oh, never fear, I'll do all that sort of thing, come along, I'll go home directly, and practice at the hen coop in the yard—I'll fire through one end, and you shall hold your calash at the other, and if I don't hit it, I am no marksman.

[*Exit Pen. and Sophy.*]

S C E N E III.

Beauchamp's Lodgings.

Enter Julia and Beauchamp.

Beau. I entreat your pardon for conducting you to my own lodgings—but here madam you will be safe till you determine how to act—what are your commands for me?

Jul. Oh, Mr. Beauchamp, I have no commands—I have no designs—I have been very imprudent—I am still more unhappy.

Beau. Shall I acquaint Mr. Fitzherbert?

Jul. It was to evade him, I left lady Bell—I have reasons that make it impossible to see Mr. Fitzherbert now.

Beau. Is there no other friend?

Jul. Oh, yes, I have one friend!—was he here all my difficulties would vanish—It may seem strange to you Mr. Beauchamp but I expect that you believe—Heav'ns! here's company—[*looking out*] 'tis miss Belmour the last woman on earth whom I would trust—where shall I go?

Beau. Miss Belmour! very odd—but pray, be not uneasy, that closet, madam—if you will condescend—[*she goes into the closet.*]

Enter Clarinda laughing.

Cla. Ha! ha! ha!—I expect your gravity to be imaginably discomposed at so hardy a visit, but I took it very ill you have not deigned to call on me before your departure—and so as I was passing your door, I stopped to enquire the cause.

Beau. You do me infinite honour, madam—I am thankful that I fail'd in my attention—since it has procured me so distinguish'd a favour.

Clar. Oh! your most obedient—you are going to leave England for a long while, you'll find us all, in different situations, probably on your return—your friend lord Sparkle for instance—I'm inform'd, that he's really to marry lady Bell Bloomer, but I don't believe it—do you?

Beau. It is impossible for me, madam.

Clar. Poh, poh! such friends as you are, I suppose keep nothing from each other—we women can't exist without a confidant and I dare say, you men are full as communicative—not that it is any thing to me, but I have a prodigious regard for lady Bell [*Belville behind calling Beauchamp.*] Heaven and earth! how unlucky I am—the nicest creature breathing in my reputation—I'll run into this room [*runs towards the closet where Julia is, and Beauchamp prevents her.*]

Beau. Pardon me madam, you can't enter there.

Clar. I must! oh, the door is held.

Beau. My dear madam, I'm infinitely sorry for the accident—but suppose a friend of mine has been in a duel, and conceal'd in that room.

Clar. Ridiculous? I saw the corner of a white satin hoop—is that the dress of your duelling friend?—I will go in—I will go in.

Enter Belville.

Belv. So, so, so, I beg pardon—how cou'd you be so indiscreet Beauchamp—tho' a young soldier—I thought you knew enough of generalship to be prepared for a surprise.

Clar. Oh! so he was—but not two surprises. One has happened already, and a hasty retreat the consequence (*points to the door.*)

Beau. I entreat you madam—believe me Belville.

Belv. A lady in the other room too! hey day!—Beauchamp—who would have suspected—

Beau. 'Tis all a mistake—the lady in the next room—put prithee go—

Belv. Only tell me, if you have seen Mr. Fitzherbert, I have been seeking him this hour on business of the utmost importance.

Beau. No, I have not, but about this time you'll find him at home.

Belv. Enough—pray miss Belmour, suffer no concern—depend upon my honour—Beauchamp—who's the lady in the next room?

Beau. Prithee begone—[*Julia comes out*]

Jul. Belville!

Clar. the modest Julia! and the reserved Beauchamp, ha, ha, ha, delightful!

Belv. Julia!

Jul. Oh! Belville throw me not from you.

Beau. Astonishing!

Jul. Speak to me.

Clar. Now Mr. Beauchamp, you know the purport of my visit—I had heard that miss Manners had been seen to visit you, and not being willing to trust to such report, was resolved, if possible, to discover the truth.

Belv. Wretched woman!

Jul. Barbarous creature—Oh hear me—I conjure you—

Belv. Hear you—no madam—and if my contempt, my hatred—my—Oh!—you Sir, I must speak to in another place—Yet perhaps you were not acquainted that—what I would say—the word I have pronounced with rapture, choaks me—from this moment—farewell—

[*Exit Belv.*]

Beau. What can I think of all this!

Jul. Oh Sir!

Beau. Permit me madam to ask—have you long known Mr. Belville?

Jul. Yes, too long—

Clar. Oh!—too long—aye, young ladies should be cautious how they form acquaintance—for my part—but you look ill, child—Well I have no hard heart, I can pity your weakness, miss—I won't upbraid you now, my coach waits, shall I conduct you home?

Jul. Yes, to lady Bell—to lady Bell—I am very ill—

Clar. Adieu! Mr. Beauchamp—this has been an unlucky frolic, it is amazing you grave people can be so careless.

[*Exeunt Julia and Clar.*]

Beau. An unlucky frolic indeed!—and I am so thoroughly confounded that I know not what judgment to form of the adventure, I always considered miss Manners, as the pattern of delicacy and virtue—nor dare I now, spite of circumstances think otherwise.

Enter Lord Sparkle.

Lord S. So, feignor Quizotte—what, what, so soon lost your prize? aye you see quarrelling for virtuous women, is as unprofitable as the assault of a wind-mill, have you seen lady Bell in my behalf?

Beau. Lady Bell, my lord!—why sure it is impossible—after your attempt on miss Manners.

Lord S. Pshaw! that's a stroke in my favour, women like to receive the devoirs, that others of their sex, have found so dangerous—what did you discover of lady Bell's sentiments towards me?

Beau. I mean't to have given you the intelligence softened, but the agitation of my mind, makes it impracticable—I must therefore inform you in one word—lady Bell's choice is made and that choice has not fallen on your lordship.

Lord S. Then I must inform you in two words, I am convinced that you are mistaken—but your reasons, your reasons Sir—

Beau. Her ladyship furnished me with a decisive one—she acknowledged a pre-engagement, and added if I visited her this evening—I should see her, in the presence of the man her heart preferred.

Lord S. Ha, ha, ha! the kindest—softest message that ever woman framed—and you like the sheep loaden with the golden fleece, bear it insensible of its value—ha! ha! you can't see thro' the pretty artifice?

Beau. No really.

Lord S. Why, 'tis that I am to be there by particular invitation, here under her own hand, I am enjoined not to forget—you'll see her in my presence---

and this was her pretty mysterious way of informing me, that I am the object of her choice.

Beau. Indeed!

Lord S. Without a doubt—but your deep people are the dullest fools at a hint—a man of half your parts would have seen it, but I am satisfied—I shall go to her route in brilliant spirits—you shall come and see my triumph confirmed—come you rogue and see the lovely widow in the presence of the man her heart prefers—poor George you must have been cursedly stupid not to have conceived that I was the person.

[*Exit lord Sparkle.*

Beau. Yes—I will come—O vanity! I had dared to explain, yes I construed the sweet confusion—Oh; I blush at my own arrogance—lord Sparkle must be right—well this night decides—narrowly I'll watch each tone and look to discover—Oh! ever blest is he whom her heart prefers.

[*Exit Beau.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

*An Apartment at Lady Bell's.**A Table with Candles.**Enter Lady Bell, and Servant,**Lady Bell.***A**RE the tables plac'd in the outer room?*Serv.* Yes madam, all but the Pharoah table.*L. Bell.* Then carry that there too—I positively will not have a table in the drawing room,*(Exit Servant.)*

Those who play don't visit me, but the Card-tables, and where, or in whose house they find them, is very immaterial—let me see—for whist, Sir James Jenet, lady Pontoo, Sir Lurch'm and lady Carmine—for Pharoah, Mrs. Evergreen, Lord Dangle, Sir Harry, hey, day!

*Enter Clarinda and Julia.**Clar. (speaks as entering)* Come child, don't faint, you had more cause for terror half an hour ago.*L. Bell.* Heavens, Julia, where have you been?

Clar. Ay, that's a circumstance, that perhaps you wou'd not have known, but for an accident—and I am very sorry it fell to my lot to make the discovery.

L. Bell. Speak my love. (*taking Julia's hand.*)

Jul. Miss Belmour will tell you all she knows—I am too wretched.

Clar. Nay as to what I know, I know very little—I can tell what I saw indeed—which is this—having received intimations not quite consonant to one's notions of decorum, I pretended a frolic, and call'd on Mr. Beauchamp, and there I found this lady conceal'd in——

L. Bell. Heavens! Julia, it's impossible.

Jul. Oh, no,—'tis true indeed.

Clar. She, she shan't attempt to deny what I myself saw, other discoveries had like to have been made too—but Miss Manners may explain them herself—for I see your rooms begin to fill, so I shall join the company—I shall report that your ladyship is a little indisposed, as an apology for your not immediately appearing.

[*Exit Clarinda.*]

L. Bell. Julia was you at Mr. Beauchamp's?

Jul. Tho' I have acted rashly, and was indeed found there, I am not the guilty creature you imagine—I am married—I will no longer conceal it.

L. Bell. Married! oh, Heavens! [*throws herself into a chair, with her back to Julia.*]

Jul. I dare not reveal it to my guardian, for that reason I fled from your house.

L. Bell. (*starting up*) Oh! Julia, if you are married, what a serpent have I nourished!—but forgive me, you knew not alas! I knew not myself to this moment.

Jul. My dearest madam, do not add to my afflictions—for indeed they are severe!

L. Bell. Ungenerous girl—why did you conceal from me your situation?

Jul. Good Heavens, is it destin'd that one imprudent step is to lose me every blessing! In the agonies of my heart I flew to your friendship—and you kill me with reproaches.

L. Bell. And you have kill'd me, by your want of confidence, Oh! Julia, had you reveal'd to me—

Jul. How cou'd I—when Mr. Belville prevail'd on me to give him my hand.

L. Bell. Mr. Belville!

Jul. Yes, it was in Paris we were married.

L. Bell. So, so, what a pretty mistake I made—but it was a mistake—but how came you at Beauchamp's, my love?

Jul. In my rash flight this morning, my wicked maid betrayed me into lord Sparkle's house—there Mr. Beauchamp snatch'd me from ruin, and gave me a momentary asylum in his lodgings.

L. Bell. (*exulting.*) Did Beauchamp! [*aside*] but what is his worth and gallantry to me, can't he do a right thing but my heart must flutter.

Jul. At Mr. Beauchamp's my husband found me, and found me hid with so suspicious a secrecy! hah, here he comes—Mr. Fitzherbert—how can I see him?

Enter Fitzherbert

Fitz. My Julia—my dear Julia——

Jul. Oh, Sir!

Fitz. Come, I know all, and to relieve one cause of your distress, will tell you the lover I teas'd you with to-day, was only my agent, in the little

pleasant revenge, I had resolv'd to take for your having married without my consent, the very man, for whom all my cares design'd you.

Jul. (clasping her hands) Is it possible?

Fitz. At the moment he left Paris, for Florence, you received my directions to return home—thus Belville's letters mis'd you, and he remain'd ignorant that you were in London.

Jul. Sir, had you reveal'd this to me this morning, what evils shou'd I have escap'd.

Fitz. My dear girl I decreed you a little punishment—but your own rashness has occasion'd thee a severer portion, than you deserv'd.

L. Bell. But where is the bridegroom—I long to see the necromancer—whose spells can thaw the vestal's heart, and light up flames in the bold regions of a monastery.

Fitz. He is without (*to Julia*) satisfied from the mouth of Beauchamp, of your conduct, and impatient to fold his Julia to his heart.

Jul. Oh! Sir, lead me to him—to find my husband and to be forgiven by you—are felicities too great.

Enter Belville.

Bel. Oh! my dear, my charming bride—I do not deserve this reception for having for a moment dared to suspect the purity of your conduct.

L. Bell. Very true—If she pardons it 'tis more than you deserve (*Belv. bows.*)

Jul. Do not blame him, lady Bell, in such circumstances, he could not avoid suspicion.—Your injunctions (*to Belv.*) made it impossible for me to reveal our marriage, and I would rather have endured

all the unhappiness that has been the consequence of my secrecy, than have disoblighd my Belville.

Fitz. Ay, these are the feelings of a young wife, what pity 'tis men will not take more care to preserve them. (*aside*)

Belv. My sweet wife! Fitzherbert, what a gift you have prepared for me.

Fitz. Ay, and take care you merit the blessing—come with lady Bell's leave, we'll retire to her library—This is one of the apartments devoted to her company.

L. Bell. Pray do, but permit me to congratulate you on your happiness, which will receive a new glow from the alarms you have undergone.

Jul. How shall I bear my felicity. [*Exeunt.*]

L. Bell. What a discovery has Julia's marriage made to me? I have persuaded myself my heart knew no passion, but the desire of conquest, that it knew no motive to admiration, but vanity—but the pangs of jealousy prov'd to me, in one moment, that all its sense is love.

S C E N E II.

Another Apartment superbly lighted.

Company at Cards.

Enter a Lady in great haste.

Lady. I protest I have been three hours getting from the top of the street to the door—I really believe people when they give routes think more of the

bustle they occasion without doors, than the company they have within.

Clar. Oh! yes, I am quite of that opinion—the noise and racket in the street, are frequently the pleasantest part of the entertainment, and to plague one's sober neighbour is delightful ha, ha, ha—my next door friend, Mrs. Saffron, always wheels into the country on my public nights, on pretence of her delicate nerves, but the truth is, her rooms will hold but six card-tables, and mine thirteen.

1st. Gent. Well, I protest I wish the ladies wou'd banish cards from their assemblies, and give us something in the style of conversation.

2d Gent. Oh no Sir Charles, that won't do on this side the Alps—we have no knack at conversation; ours is mere prate—we think too much to be able to talk—good talkers never think—Sir Harry, full of bon mots never thinks—Mr. Snapper a great wit, never thinks—I myself am allowed to be tolerable—I never think!

Clar. Oh! that I believe all your friends will credit—hey day, here comes lord Sparkle's borough acquaintance, Mr. Pendragon,

Enter Pendragon.

Pen. Bobbs, Miss Belmour how do you do, I didn't think to see you—Mr. Fitzherbert brought me here and I have been examining every face to see if I knew any body, but fine ladies are so alike when they are dress'd that one must have long use to pick out one's acquaintance—red cheeks—white necks and smiling lips, crowd every room.

Lady. Hey, day! a natural curiosity—pray Sir, how long have you been in the world?

K

Pen. How long? just twenty years, last Lammas.

Lady. Poh, I don't enquire into your age, how long is it since you left your native woods—was you ever at a route before?

Pen. Ay, that I was last week—it beat this all to nothing——'twas at our neighbours, the wine merchant's at his country-house at Kentish-town.

2d Lady. Oh, Lord! I wish I had been of your party—I shou'd have enjoy'd a Kentish-town route.

Pen. Oh! you must have been pleas'd, for the rooms were so little, and the company so large, that every thing was done with one consent——we were pack'd like a box of corks, and if one party mov'd, all the rest were obliged to obey the motion.

Lady. Oh, delightful! Well Sir?

Pen. We had all the fat widows, notable misses and managing wives of the parish——so there was no scandal, for they were all there—at length, the assembly broke up, such clattering and squeezing down the gang-way stair case—whilst the little foot-boy, bawl'd from the passage—Miss Bobbin's bonnet is ready—Mr. Sugarplumb's lanthorn waits——Mrs. Peppercorn's pattens—don't stop the way.

Clar. Oh! you delightful creature, come with me, I must exhibit him in the next room.

[*Exeunt Clar. and Pen.*]

Lady. Oh! stay, take my card—I shall have company next Wednesday, and shall insist on yours (*several ladies give him cards*) the creature is really amusing—but hide your diminish'd heads ye beaux and wittings—for here comes lord Sparkle.

Enter Lord Sparkle.

Lord S. (*Speaks as entering.*) I hope the belles won't hide their's—for in an age, where the head is so large a part of the lady, it wou'd be difficult to discover the sex.

Enter Lady Bell.

L. Bell. (*addresses several persons*) How d'ye do—how d'ye do? (*on each side*) you wicked creature, why did you disappoint me last night? lady Harriet, I have not seen you this age—oh! lord Sparkle, I have been detain'd from the company so long by Mr. Fitzherbert's planning a scheme for your amusement.

Lord S. Indeed! I did not expect that attention from him—tho' I acknowledge my obligations to your ladyship's politeness.

L. Bell. (*aside*) That cool air of self passion, I fancy would be incommoded—if you guessed at the entertainment—have you seen Mr. Beauchamp?

Lord S. For a moment—(*company retires*) but charming (*taking her hand*) but I shall make you expire with laughing—I really believe the poor fellow explain'd your message in his own favour, ha, ha, ha.

L. Bell. Ridiculous! ha, ha, ha.

Enter Beauchamp.

Beau. Ha, 'tis true—they are retir'd and enjoying the privacy of lovers.

L. Bell. See, there he is—I long to have a little badinage on the subject—let us teaze him.

Lord S. Oh! nothing can be more delightful—hither fighting shepherd haste—come Beauchamp take one last, one languishing look—shan't he lady Bell?

L. Bell. Doubtless, if he has your lordship's leave.

Lord S. He seems astonish'd ha, ha, ha, nay it is cruel—if the poor youth has the misfortune to be stricken, you know he can't resist fate—Ixion sigh'd for Juno.

L. Bell. Yes, and he was punish'd too—what punishment Mr. Beauchamp, shall we decree to you?

Beau. I'm astonish'd—was it for this your ladyship commanded me to attend you?

L. Bell. How did I command you—do you remember the words?

Beau. I do, madam—you told me I shou'd see you this evening in the presence of the man your heart prefers.

L. Bell. Well Sir—now do you see me in the presence of the man my heart prefers.

Lord S. Oh! the sweet confusion of the sweet confession (*kissing her hand*).

Beau. (*aside*) 'Sdeath—this ostentation of felicity, madam, is ungenerous, since you know my heart—'tis unworthy you, but I thank you for it—I have a pang the less [*going*.]

L. Bell. Hold, Sir! are you going?

Beau. This instant, madam—I came in obedience to your commands—but my chaise is at the door, and before your gay assembly breaks up, I shall be far from London, and in a day or two from England, I probably now see your ladyship for the last time (*going*.)

L. Bell. Stay, Mr. Beauchamp.

Lord S. Aye, prithee stay—I believe lady Bell has a mind to make you her conjugal father.

Beau. I forgive you my lord—excess of happiness, frequently overflows into violence, and it is the privilege of felicity to be unfeeling. But how, madam, has that humble passion which has consumed my life, render'd me so hateful to you, as to prompt you to this barbarity? I have not insulted you with my love, I have scarcely dared whisper it to myself—how then have I deserved—

L. Bell. Oh, mercy! don't be so grave—I am not insensible of your merit—nor have I beheld your passion with disdain—but what can I do lord Sparkle?

Lord S. My dearest lady Bell, you justify my ideas of your discernment, and thus [*kneeling*] I thank you for the distinguished honor.

Enter Sophy running.

Sophy. Oh! you false hard hearted man!

Lord S. [*starting up*] Hey-day—

Sophy. Don't believe a word he says for all you are a fine lady—he'll tell you of happiness, and misery, and this and that and the other—but 'tis all commonplace, and hyperbole—and all that sort of thing.

L. Bell. Indeed! what has this young lady claims on your lordship?

Lord S. Claims, ha! ha! sure your ladyship can answer that at a single glance—Claims! ha! ha! Is it my fault that a little rustic does not understand the language of the day—compliments are the current coin of conversation and 'tis every one's business to understand their value.

Enter Pendragon.

Pen. True my lord, true—and what was the value of the compliment, when you told me that I should make a figure in the guards, and that you would speak to a great friend to make me a colonel.

Lord S. Value, why it has got me a hundred extra votes, and you are now a little ungrateful wretch to pretend it was worth nothing.

Enter Fitzherbert leading Julia.

Fitz. But here lord Sparkle, is a lady who claims a right on a different foundation! she had no election interest to provoke your flatteries—yet you have not scrupled to profess love to her, whilst under the roof of her friend, whose hand you was soliciting in marriage.

Jul. Yes, I intreat your ladyship not to fancy that you are to break the hearts of half our sex, by binding lord Sparkle—in the adamant chains of matrimony—I boast an equal right with you—and don't flatter yourself I shall resign him.

Lord S. Mere malice, lady Bell—*Fitz.* malice—I never had a thought of miss Manners in my life.

Enter Belville.

Belv. What my lord! and have you dared talk of love to that lady, without a serious thought.

Lord S. Hey day! what right have you?

Belv. Oh! very trifling—only the right of a husband—the lady so honor'd with your love making

in *jest*, is my wife—in course all obligations to her, devolve upon me.

Lord S. Your wife—my dear Belville—I give you joy, with all my soul; you see 'tis always dangerous to keep secrets from your friends.—But is any body else coming, (*looking thro' the door*) have I any new crimes to be accused of—any more witnesses coming to the bar?

Bel. No, but I am a witness in a new cause, and accuse you with loading the mind of my friend Beauchamp, with a sense of obligations, you had neither spirit, nor justice to confer.

L. Bell. A commission my lord, which was sent Mr. Beauchamp, under a blank cover, by one, who cou'd not bear to see his noble spirit, dependant on your caprices.

Belv. And when his sentiments pointed out your lordship as his benefactor, you accepted the honor, and have laid heavy taxes on his gratitude.

Lord S. Well, and what is there in all that? Beauchamp did not know to whom he was obliged, and wou'dn't it been a most unchristian thing, to let a good action run about the world belonging to nobody—I found it a stray'd orphan, and so father'd it—but you Fitzherbert, I see, is the lawful owner of the brat—so prithee take it back and thank me for the patronage.

Fitz. Your affected pleasantry, lord Sparkle, may shield you from resentment, but it will not from contempt—your effrontery.

Lord S. Effrontery! prithee make distinctions—what in certain lines would be effrontery, in me is only the fashion, that delightful thing, which enables me at this moment to stand serene, amidst your meditated storm—come my dear lady Bell, let us leave

these good gentry, and lose ourselves amidst the delights of fashion and the charms of bon ton.

L. Bell. Pardon me my lord, as caprice is absolutely necessary to the character of a fine lady, you will not be surpris'd if I give you an instance of it now, and 'spite of your elegance, your fashion, and your wit, present my hand to this poor soldier—who boasts only worth, spirit, honour and love.

Beau. Have a care madam, feelings like mine, are not to be trifled with—once already the hopes you have inspired——

L. Bell. The hour of trifling is past—and surely it cannot appear extraordinary, that I shou'd prefer the internal worth of an uncorrupted heart, to the outward polish of a mind, too feeble to support itself against vice, in the seductive forms of fashionable dissipation.

Lord S. Hey, day, what is your ladyship in the plot?

Fitz. The plot has been deeper laid than you, my lord, have been able to conceive, as I have the misfortune to be related to you, I thought it my duty to watch over your conduct—I have seen your plans which generally tended to your confusion and disgrace, many of them have been defeated though you know not by what means—but what fate does your lordship design for those decoyed by you, from their natural ignorance and home?

Sophy. Aye, what is to become of Bobby and me?

Lord S. Let them return to both as fast as they can.

Pen. No, no, hang me if I do that—I know life, and life I'll have—Hyde-park—plays—operas—routes—but old gentleman, you promis'd to do something for me—what think you of a commission?—the

captain there can't want his, now suppose you turn it over to me?

Fitz. No young man, you shall be taken care of, but tho' the requisites of a soldier are not those of impertinence and assurance---intrepid spirit---nice honor---generosity and understanding, all unite to form him---it is these will make a British soldier once again the first character in Europe---it is such soldiers that must make England once again invincible.

Sophy. Well, Bobby may do as he will---I'll go back to Cornwall directly---and warn all my neighbours to take special care how they trust to a lord's promise at an election again.

Lord S. Well, great attempts and great failings mark the man of spirit---there is an eclat even in my disappointment to-night, and I am ready for a fresh set of adventures to-morrow.

Fitz. Incorrigible man! but I have done with you; Beauchamp has answered all my hopes, and the discernment of this charming woman in rewarding him, merits the happiness that awaits her---and that I may give the fullest sanction to her choice, I declare him heir to my estate---this I know is a stroke which your lordship did not expect---a great part of your ill conduct has been owing to your not suspecting that the intail was in my power.

Lord S. (aside) That is admirable! but I must inform you, that I this morning settled the terms of a post obit on my expected estate, so I have made you serve me in spite of yourself---that is a stroke you did not expect.

Fitz. Aye, but those terms will never be concluded, as the parties have been with me, to know the grounds of your pretences.

Lord S. The devil! that's unlucky to be sure, but even that shall not disturb the natural tranquillity of my temper.

Beau. And was it then to you Sir—the tumults of my gratitude (*attempts to kneel*)

Fitz. (*restraining him*) Your conduct has completely rewarded me—and in adopting you——

L. Bell. I protest against that, our union will now appear a prudent sober business, and I lose the credit of having done a mad thing—for the sake of the man my heart prefers.

Fitz. To you I resign him with pleasure, his fate is in good hands.

L. Bell. Then he shall continue a soldier, one of those, whom love, and his country detain, to guard her dearest, last possessions.

Beau. Love and my country! yes, ye shall divide my heart!—Animated by such passion as our forefathers were invincible, and if we wou'd preserve the freedom and independence they obtain'd for us, we must emulate their virtues.

F. I. N. I. S.